Ex Bertha bringing wet and windy weather

9 August 2014 - The remnants of hurricane Bertha looks set to track across the UK over the next few days. .

The weather will turn wet and windy in many parts from Sunday morning, with gales perhaps severe, likely along some southern coastal and inland areas.

The Met Office has been assessing the effects of ex hurricane Bertha on the UK by using its own forecast models alongside models from other world-leading forecast centres.

At the moment it looks as though the storm will track across the southern half of the UK on Sunday before heading out into the North Sea and travelling up the eastern coast, bringing some disruption to Scotland on Monday. Much of the UK will see large rainfall totals, however their remains some uncertainty relating to the strength of the winds, which could be locally very disruptive.

We are expecting unseasonable storm force winds in the northern North Sea with the risk of 80 mile per hour plus gusts which could be dangerous for shipping / offshore operations.

We are watching very carefully and that the forecast is constantly under review and subject to change.

Chief Meteorologist, Steve Willington, said: "Rain and strong winds may bring disruption on Sunday, especially across southern parts of the UK, with the potential for more than 50 mm of rain and coastal gusts of over 60 mph. People should stay up to date with the latest Met Office warnings."

Craig Woolhouse, Environment Agency Flood Risk Manager, said: "Widespread heavy rain on Sunday may lead to localised surface water flooding in some parts of England. On Sunday and Monday a combination of high spring tides and strong westerly winds bring a risk of large waves and spray and possible flooding to the south west coast of England and along the Severn Estuary. The unseasonal low pressure system looks set to sweep up from the South West, through the Midlands and, towards the Humber from the early hours of Sunday morning.

"We advise people to keep themselves informed by checking flood warnings on the Environment Agency website and listening to local radio. If you're travelling to or from holiday then check your flood risk before setting off and don't drive through flood waters. If you're by the coast then stay safe, keep clear of promenades and don't be tempted to put yourself at risk.

"The Environment Agency is continuing to monitor the situation closely along with the Met Office and local authorities. Our teams are out on the ground, ensuring coastal flood defences are ready, rivers can flow freely and clearing trash screens. People can sign up to receive free flood warnings, check their flood risk and keep up to date with the latest situation on the GOV.UK website or follow @EnvAgency and #floodaware on Twitter for the latest flood updates."

Marc Becker, Hydrology Duty Manager, for the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) said: "Heavy rain is expected over Shetland and northern parts of Orkney today (Saturday 9 August) which has the potential to result in some localised flooding in the Northern Isles.

"Wet and windy weather is expected across many parts of the country over the coming days due to the ex-tropical storm Bertha. SEPA will continue to monitor the situation and would encourage the public to check the Scottish Flood Forecasting Service website for flood alerts (floodline.sepa.org.uk/floodupdates/) or call SEPA's Floodline on 0345 988 1188 for the most up to date information on their area."

Jeremy Parr, Head of Flood Risk Management, Natural Resources Wales , said: "Our officers will be monitoring forecasts closely over the weekend as the situation in Wales becomes clearer but in the meantime we are advising people to remain alert.

"We are likely to see some very heavy rain on Sunday into Monday, and combined with strong winds and high spring tides, conditions along the coast could be dangerous. As the forecast remains unsettled, we are advising people to keep an eye on weather forecasts and check the latest flood alerts on our website."

Ross Macloed, RNLI Coastal Safety Manager, said: "Extreme wave heights combined with high tides can make some normal coastal activities we take for granted significantly more risky; the force of surging water or breaking waves can easily knock you over and quickly drag you out of your depth and once in the water it can be difficult to get out. As little as one cubic metre of water weighs a tonne and shows that you should never underestimate how powerful the sea can be.

"If you are planning a coastal activity, our advice is to respect the water, and watch the shore from a safe distance and assess the conditions; think about the risk before deciding if you need to go closer."

Met Office records show that there are similar examples of intense low pressure systems occurring in August, for example, the 24 August 2005 where an active storm sat off the northwest coast of Scotland bringing strong winds and heavy rain. On the 30 August 1992 a depression swung up from the southwest across the UK giving a wet and windy Bank Holiday weekend.

We will be keeping an eye on the latest outlook for the weather over the next few days and the progress of ex Bertha to keep everyone up to date with the latest information.

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